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FM AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 1338
INFO RUEHAC/AMEMBASSY ASUNCION 2911
RUEHBO/AMEMBASSY BOGOTA 1694
RUEHBR/AMEMBASSY BRASILIA 3581
RUEHBU/AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES 0217
RUEHCV/AMEMBASSY CARACAS 1343
RUEHPE/AMEMBASSY LIMA 5027
RUEHOT/AMEMBASSY QUITO 1671
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC
RHMFISS/HQ USSOUTHCOM MIAMI FL
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SANTIAGO 000618

SIPDIS

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 04/12/2017
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [CI](#)
SUBJECT: NEW CHILEAN DEFENSE MINISTER TAKES THE HELM

REF: A) SANTIAGO 500

Classified By: Ambassador Craig Kelly for reasons 1.5 (b and d).

Summary

- [1](#)1. (C) New Minister of Defense Goni told the Ambassador his initial focus would be on strengthening Chile's regional military-to-military tie
[1](#)2. (U) On April 13, the Ambassador called on newly appointed Minister of Defense Jose ""Goni"" Carrasco, who was appointed to the position on

Making Nice with the Neighborhood

- [1](#)3. (C) Goni said that he was under instruction from President Bachelet to ""build bridges"" to Chile's neighbors, including Peru, Bolivia and
[1](#)4. (C) Goni, who had been serving as Chile's ambassador to Mexico when Bachelet tabbed him as MinDef, reviewed the state of Chilean-Mexican re
[1](#)5. (C) Goni said relations with Bolivia were good, with a focus on confidence building measures (CBMs). He described the Bolivian press as le
[1](#)6. (C) The MinDef said he would meet with Peruvian MinDef Wagner the following week. Relations with Peru were also stable, noting the visit t
[1](#)7. (C) On Argentina, Goni pointed to ""great cooperation"" in developing with Buenos Aires a joint peacekeeping battalion. It would be operati
[1](#)8. (C) The Ambassador observed that mil-to-mil relations were often key to establishing partnerships that could withstand political or economi

The Chilean Way

9.(C) Asked for USG views on Ecuador, the Ambassador replied that ""We want to keep the door open."" Commercial disputes involving American fi
13 meeting between Secretary Rice and FM Foxley going on ""as we speak"" - are proof. We support Chile improving relations with its neighbors

SOFA

- [1](#)10. (C) The Ambassador commented that the U.S., while clearly interested in entering into a long-term SOFA with Chile, understood the need to

Helicopter Purchases

[1](#)11. (C) The Ambassador asked about the status of Chilean military interest in upgrading its helicopter fleet. He noted U.S. manufacturers Sik
packages. The Mission was prepared to facilitate ongoing discussions. Goni replied he had alot on his plate and wasn't familar with the issue

Copper Law

- [1](#)12. (C) Goni told the Ambassador he was studying various reform proposals to Chilean legislation which now requires that ten percent of copper
[1](#)13. (C) The Ambassador concluded the meeting by expressing appreciation for Chilean support for MINUSTAH and agreed with Goni that it would be

Comment

[1](#)14. (C) Goni appeared up to speed on most issues, although still reading in. He was surprisingly unenthusiastic regarding prospects for a lor
March visit there had clearly impressed the President, leading her to offer him this key portfolio. Endcomment.
KELLY